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**"Congressman Boyd and the Blue Dog Coalition Call For a Responsible Increase in the Debt Limit as Part of a Fiscally Responsible Plan "**

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Allen Boyd (D-North Florida), along with his fellow colleagues in the Blue Dog Coalition, a group of 33 moderate-to-conservative Democrats focused on fiscal responsibility, released the following statement in response to the Republican Leadership sneaking language into the Supplemental Appropriations Bill that allow for a \$750 billion increase to our public debt.

"Since the beginning of the year, the Blue Dogs have argued that any increase in the debt limit must be included as part of a fiscally responsible plan to protect taxpayers from further increases in the debt. However, the Republican leadership put vague language related to the debt limit in the supplemental appropriations bill this week so the administration's request for a \$750 billion increase in the debt limit can be added in conference without a separate vote on this issue or a plan to get the budget back to balance.

"The Blue Dogs have proposed providing the administration with a short term increase in the debt limit to avoid a default, while making the larger increase in the debt limit requested by the administration contingent upon action by Congress and the President to put the budget back on a path to balance without using the Social Security surplus. This is a much more responsible approach than using a bill intended to fund the war on terrorism to sneak an increase in the debt limit into law without addressing the fiscal problems highlighted by the need to increase the debt limit.

"Every day, Americans pay \$1 billion in interest on our national debt. This is about 16 cents of every dollar they pay in taxes, just to make the interest payment, not even to pay down the debt itself. In response to these types of statistics, last month, the Blue Dogs rolled out a plan, "It's Elementary: The ABCs of Securing Our Children's Future," advocating fiscal responsibility in the wake of deficit spending and the growing national debt. Part C of the plan, "Climbing Out of the Deficit Ditch Act," would make a short-term increase in the debt limit contingent upon action by Congress and the President to put the budget back on a path to balance without using the Social Security surplus."